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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBE #0131 0652016
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 052016Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY BELMOPAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1139
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0015
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 0022
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0165
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 0131
RHMFISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELMOPAN 000131

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FOR WHA/CEN - R. BEAL, INL
EMBASSIES FOR LEGATT, DEA, REGIONAL AFFAIRS, USMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [SOCI](#) [PINR](#) [ASEC](#) [BH](#)
SUBJECT: (C) BELIZE: GOVERNMENT REQUESTS ASSISTANCE
TRACKING MISSING FUNDS

REF: A. A) BELMOPAN 130 (NOTAL)
[1](#)B. B) BELMOPAN 109 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR ROBERT J. DIETER, REASONS 1.4(b)
) AND (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Attorney General/Foreign Minister Elrington has asked the Ambassador for USG assistance in tracking a Venezuelan grant made just before the election and now the subject of controversy over the amount provided (REF A). Elrington requested any information we might be able to provide on the actual amount of the loan, and, if it was more than US\$10 million, where any additional funds were transferred to.

[1](#)2. (C) In addition, Elrington has asked for USG assistance in providing an expert assessment of what would be required to perform a complete audit of government finances for the past decade, in order to identify misappropriated assets.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: We believe the GOB is serious about seeking to identify stolen government money and recover stolen public assets. Such action, including prosecution in serious cases, would go a long way to breaking the culture of impunity that allowed corruption to flourish in recent years. This request for law enforcement assistance presents an excellent opportunity for the USG to develop early, positive relations with the GOB in the area of financial intelligence including GOB's Financial Intelligence Unit. If we can assist the new government with asset recovery and prosecution, we will open the door to the type of broader information sharing on money laundering and criminal financial transactions that we have sought for some time. We also believe that the recent assistance request from the National Security Minister (REF B) is a useful one which the USG should support. END COMMENT.
DIETER